

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable consideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 5-12 and 14-19 are presently pending in this application, Claims 1-4 and 13 having been canceled, and Claims 5-10 and 14-17 having been amended by the present amendment.

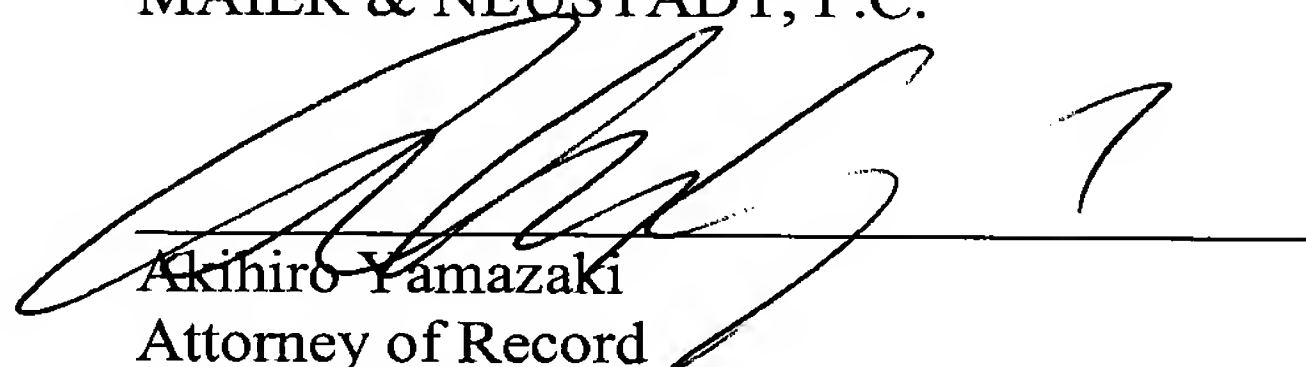
In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1-4 and 13-15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Allison (U.S. Patent 3,198,928); and Claims 9-12 and 16-19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Allison in view of Sekiguchi et al. (U.S. Patent 5,475,999). However, Claims 5-8 were indicated as allowed.

First, Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the indication that Claims 5-8 have been allowed. Accordingly, Claim 5 has been amended solely for clarification. Specifically, Claim 5 has been amended for formalities and also for replacement of the term “swaging” with “upsetting” and the term “scheduled enlarged diameter portion” with “diameter expansion scheduled portion” for clarification. No new matter is believed to be added thereby. Also, Claim 14 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter recited in Claim 5, and Claims 6-10 and 15-17 have been amended in accordance with amended Claims 5 and 14. Applicants respectfully request that Claims 1-4 and 13 be canceled without prejudice.

In light of the prior indication of allowable claims and in view of the amendments presented above, no further issues are believed to be outstanding, and the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance. If, however, the Examiner disagrees with any of the amendments presented herein, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned who will be happy to work in a joint effort to resolve any remaining issues and expedite the prosecution of the present application. Applicants respectfully request an early and favorable action to that effect.

Respectfully submitted,

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